



Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) Program

*Students from Eurasia
Pre and Post Survey Analysis*

Academic Year 2006-2007

Key Findings Report

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Measuring the Performance of International Educational and Cultural Programs

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In March of 2005, the Youth Programs Division in the Office of Citizen Exchanges engaged the Office of Policy and Evaluation in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) to conduct outcome assessments of the Future Leaders Exchange (FLEX) program over the next three academic years.

PROGRAM MISSION AND GOALS

FLEX was established in 1992 as the centerpiece of the Newly Independent States (NIS) Secondary School Initiative in the FREEDOM (“Freedom for Russian and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets”) Support Act. Now funded by ECA, the FLEX program provides an opportunity for 14 to 17 year old high school students from Eurasia to experience American culture and values firsthand in order to promote democratic values and institutions in Eurasia.

Through the FLEX program students gain a better understanding of a democratic society, and by developing a mutual understanding they are able to foster a relationship between the people of Eurasia and the United States. This in turn helps to assist the successor generations of Eurasian countries in developing the qualities it will need to lead them in their aspirations for transformation in the 21st century; and to promote democratic values and civic responsibility by giving Eurasian youth the opportunity to live in American society and participate in focused activities during their time in the United States. The FLEX program’s central goals are:

- **FLEX students** will acquire an understanding of important elements of a civil society, that includes concepts such as volunteerism, the idea that American citizens can and do act on their own to deal with societal problems, and an awareness of an respect for the rule of law.
- **FLEX students** will show willingness and a commitment to serve as agents for change in their countries after they return home.
- **FLEX students** will develop an appreciation for American culture.
- **FLEX students** will interact with Americans and generate enduring ties.
- **FLEX students** will teach Americans about the cultures of their home countries and teach citizens of their home countries about the United States.

PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

Students from Eurasia spend one full academic year attending American schools across the United States, while living with host families. The initial recruitment process is conducted by the grantee organization, American Councils who serves as a liaison between the students and their families in their home countries. Once students arrive in the United States, they are placed under one of 13 different grantee organizations responsible for the placement and administration of the program.

By attending an American school and sharing in American family life with a host family, each scholarship recipient will learn about the United States, increase his or her sensitivity to cultural differences and similarities, develop a deepened awareness of shared human values and interests, and experience growth and maturity. Furthermore, it is a desire of the program sponsors that these participants might serve as cultural ambassadors of their respective countries and cultures, raising awareness about their countries and religion, and upon their return to their home countries, spread awareness about American values and culture.

A select number of students who have a weaker English language capability than the standard, but excelled in all other criteria, participate in a pre-program English language enhancement workshop intended to enable and enhance their educational experiences. These workshops are arranged by individual placement organizations in their host communities a few weeks before the school year begins. At this time an Independence Skills Training is also conducted for students with a disability.

During the program, some participants are selected via an essay contest to meet with Washington leaders during a week-long Civic Education Workshop that promotes the understanding and appreciation of democratic concepts such as civic responsibility, citizen empowerment, volunteerism, and community action.

Lastly, there is a leadership re-entry workshop provided towards the end of the program to those students with disabilities. The purpose is to help prepare students for the transition that will occur upon their return home. After living in the United States for a year, these students have acclimated to the support systems that exist in the United States, and will therefore need help in dealing with the adjustment.

Finally, after their exchange year has ended and they have returned home, students have the option to participate in one of the numerous alumni associations active throughout each of the countries of Eurasia. Twenty “program hubs” overseen by a central coordinator provide a focal point for the organization of alumni activities in the regions where they are located.

DESCRIPTION OF STUDY

This is the second consecutive year in which ECA's Evaluation Division within the Office of Policy and Evaluation has conducted a rigorous FLEX study using E-GOALS, the Bureau's signature online performance measurement system. The comprehensive study looked at each of the program's thematic areas and its impact on the students by reporting upon FLEX's ability to achieve its program goals related to democratic values and freedom of speech, civic education and volunteerism, American culture and people, United States government, tolerance and equality, leadership, and achieving lasting ties with Americans.

As a part of this year's assessment, two comprehensive surveys of FLEX participants were administered: 1) before the start of the program (pre), and 2) at the end of the program (post) prior to their return home in order to fully assess their exchange experiences. These surveys also contained some of the indicator questions that are linked to the following ECA Bureau performance outcomes:

- Trust of Government: Increased trust of the United States Government
- American Values: Participants espouse democratic values
- People: More favorable views of the United States government and American people
- Understanding: Increased understanding of United States institutions, fundamental norms and values

METHOD OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

In order to help substantiate key assessment findings, the pre and post-program surveys were designed to compliment each other. This included where appropriate, identical questions that were asked on both surveys so that key statistical analyses may be run.

The analysis used for this study was an independent t-test which tests the statistical significance of key variables. This allows the E-GOALS staff to identify changes in key thematic program areas from the pre-program survey to the post-program survey, whereby a conclusion can be drawn that to a degree (or percentage) of certainty these changes may be related directly to the students participation in the program. Thus, the data supports the effectiveness of that particular program theme.

An independent t-test assumes that two samples are taken from two independent samples, rather than one sample measured twice. This type of analysis was necessary due to the confidential nature of the survey that meant a respondent's pre data can not be matched to their post data. Therefore the analysis has a greater potential to under-report the actual degree of change. So what appears to be a small change over time

may in fact be much larger. As a result, the improvements reported in this assessment are likely to be even greater.

DATA LIMITATIONS

It should be noted that both finalists and alternates participated in the pre-departure orientations held in their home countries, and is where the pre-program surveys were administered. Therefore, both finalists and alternates who ultimately did not participate in the program were able to complete a pre survey. Once notified of this, E-GOALS staff reviewed the pre survey data and removed as many alternates as could be identified by comparing the participant list to uniquely identifiable demographic responses. However, not all alternates could be identified and removed due to students not providing responses to all demographic questions on the survey. Because this was only a very small percentage (less than 1%) of students, it will not affect the ability to analyze and interpret the data.

KEY ASSESSMENT FINDINGS OF THE FLEX PROGRAM¹

- In the post-survey, FLEX respondents agreed the strongest with the following out of seven democratic values presented: *all citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law* (99%).
- By the end of the program, 93 percent of FLEX respondents reported either a “generally favorable” or “strongly favorable” view of the American people.
- Respondents were in strong agreement with the ideas that in society: *ethnic minorities should have equal opportunities* (96%), and *men and women should have equal opportunities* (97%).
- According to the post data, nearly all of the FLEX respondents (95%) plan to share their experience and knowledge gained from the FLEX program by giving presentations to their community, neighborhood, school, or university.
- FLEX respondents believed the three most important accomplishments of their time in the United States were: *increased understanding of American society, people, and culture* (81%); *sharing their own culture with others*, (47%); and *improved English* (39%).
- In the post-survey, 70 percent of respondents reported a favorable view of the United States government; similar to the pre-survey results (71%).
- 91 percent of respondents indicated that they participated in community service on a regular basis during the FLEX program.
- After their exchange experience, 92 percent of respondents intend to participate in volunteering back home.
- Overall, the FLEX program was successful in improving students’ leadership skills in: self-reliance, flexibility, tolerance, public-speaking, listening, expressing ideas, motivation, problem-solving, discussing beliefs and values, and willing to make changes in the community. The percentage of respondents who rated themselves as “good” or “excellent” ranged from 89 to 98 percent.
- 56 percent of respondents reported that life in the United States was “somewhat” or “very easy.”
- 76 percent of respondents were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with the relationship with their local coordinator.
- 80 percent of respondents reported satisfaction with the FLEX program activities which included trips, workshops, and community service.

¹ All percentages shown in this report are adjusted based upon the total number of responses for each survey. Pre Survey: 1,180 students = 98% response rate, Post Survey: 903 students = 78% response rate

DEMOCRACY AND FREEDOM

A key program area of FLEX focuses on the principles of democracy and freedom. To promote democratic values and institutions in Eurasia, the FLEX program exposes participants to democratic life in the United States. After spending an academic year in the United States, there were statistically significant increases in the FLEX respondents' understanding of several democratic topics and values (see *Tables 2 and 3*).

In the post-program survey:

- 77 percent of respondents reported their understanding of *United States democracy* as “beyond basic” or “advanced knowledge”. This was a 50 percent increase from the pre-survey results.
- 85 percent of respondents now feel that they have a “beyond basic” or “advanced knowledge” of *freedom of speech and the press in the United States*, compared to only 48 percent who felt that way prior to the program.
- When asked to rate their level of agreement regarding seven democratic values, respondents felt the strongest about *all citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law* (99% “agreed” or “strongly agreed”).
- More than 90 percent of respondents were in agreement with the following five democratic values: 1) *voting is important because real decisions are made in elections*, 2) *free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy*, 3) *independent media is important to the free flow of information*, 4) *the Rule of Law is fundamental to a functioning democracy*, and 5) *individuals have the right to free speech and to voice opposition*.
- Respondents' understanding of the *United States economy* also increased significantly with 62 percent reporting their level of knowledge as either “beyond basic” or “advanced”.

In Their Own Words...

- “...enriched my knowledge of democracy, capitalism, free-enterprise and laissez-faire economics - the fundamental cornerstones of American government.” (Kyrgyzstan)
- “I definitely know more about...the rights of Americans citizens, and...how a real democracy works.” (Kyrgyzstan)
- “I learned a lot more about American democracy, how it works, how the government does it’s work.” (Ukraine)
- “[The thing I liked the most about my experience was the] feeling of freedom, feeling that you are master of your life, feeling that you are powerful and have opportunity to do something for people.” (Russia)

Tables 2 and 3 show the average means for key variables asked on both the pre and post survey, and are based upon the question's response scale values. It also demonstrates the corresponding change in those means across the life of the program. Changes that are statistically significant are identified with arrows. Both tables indicate that many key variables that addressed the concepts of democracy and freedom had statistically significant increases in their values, which greatly supports the idea that these positive changes are most likely a direct result of the students' participation in the FLEX program, and not due to chance.

TABLE 2

Understanding	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change ²
U.S. Democracy	3.00	4.09	↑ +1.09
U.S. Economy	2.89	3.79	↑ +0.90
Freedom of speech and the press in the U.S.	3.49	4.34	↑ +0.85

¹ 1=No Knowledge, 2=Less Than Basic, 3=Basic Knowledge, 4=Beyond Basic, 5=Advanced Knowledge

² Arrows represent the positive change of those variables with statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$

TABLE 3

Democratic Values	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change ²
Voting is important because real decisions are made in elections	1.16	1.44	↑ +0.28
Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy	1.33	1.64	↑ +0.31
An independent media is important to the free flow of information	1.27	1.44	↑ +0.17
All citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law	1.70	1.84	↑ +0.14
The Rule of Law is fundamental to a functioning democracy	1.38	1.55	↑ +0.17
Individuals and Organizations have the right to free speech and to voice opposition	1.40	1.65	↑ +0.25
Teachers should incorporate democratic principles into their classroom practices	N/A ³	1.12	N/A

¹ -2=Strongly Disagree, -1=Disagree, 0=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 1=Agree, 2=Strongly Agree

² Arrows represent the positive change of those variables with statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$

³ Changes to the FLEX survey instruments were made mid-way through the academic year. Therefore this statement was not part of the pre-survey at the time of administration.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND VOLUNTEERISM

Another aspect of the FLEX program is to teach students about civic engagement and to help students gain a greater understanding and appreciation of this uniquely democratic concept. In particular, the FLEX program aims to not only increase their knowledge of volunteerism, community action, civic responsibility, and citizen

empowerment, but to also encourage the use of applying this new knowledge in their home countries.

During the program:

- FLEX respondents were very active in fulfilling their community service requirement set by their particular placement organization. 91 percent indicated that they participated in these types of activities “some” or “most of the time.”
- Respondents were not directly asked to identify the types of community service activities they participated in, but the type of activities that were indirectly mentioned ranged from volunteering at places such as nursing centers and local YMCA's, to aiding in disaster relief.
- 80 percent of respondents reported that they were either “satisfied” or “very satisfied” when asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with FLEX program activities including community service and the workshops.

Upon completion of the program:

- 85 percent of respondents felt that they now had a “beyond basic” or “advanced knowledge” of *voluntary community service*. This is a statistically significant increase compared to the 36 percent of respondents who reported this level of knowledge on the pre-survey.
- 92 percent of respondents report that they will volunteer in their communities as a direct result of their participation.
- 6 percent of respondents stated that their volunteer experiences were one of the best aspects of their exchange experience.

In Their Own Words...

- *“My volunteer work here at the local Nursing Center brought me lots of wonderful moments and joy.” (Kyrgyzstan)*
- *“I have learned a lot during this year, I got to know about what community service was and why volunteering was so great...” (Russia)*
- *“I also liked the idea of volunteering, which is not really popular in Russia, so I am going to promote that when I go home.” (Russia)*
- *“...I didn't have [volunteering] experience at home....It gave me a better appreciation of life, people around me, my parents and everything they give. I realized how lucky we all are.” (Ukraine)*
- *“I got into volunteerism, social work... It's a pleasure to help other people and to do efforts to make our world better.” (Ukraine)*
- *“I learned the true meaning of volunteering, how EVERY person can make a difference.” (Ukraine)*

Table 4 indicates that respondents' understanding of the concept of voluntary community service had a statistically significant increase in its value. Its average mean jumped more than one point. There is a 95 percent chance that this positive change was a direct result of the students' participation in the FLEX program, and not due to random chance.

TABLE 4

Understanding	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change ²
Voluntary community service	3.11	4.35	↑ +1.24

¹ 1=No Knowledge, 2=Less Than Basic, 3=Basic Knowledge, 4=Beyond Basic, 5=Advanced Knowledge

² Arrows represent the positive change of those variables with statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$

PERCEPTIONS OF UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT AND AMERICAN PEOPLE

Promoting a greater understanding and improvement in the relationship between the United States and the students' home countries is another priority of the FLEX program. By improving the students' perceptions of the United States government and the American people, the program can achieve a level of mutual understanding that will benefit both the United States and the Eurasian countries.

Prior to their participation in the FLEX program:

- The three aspects that FLEX students most frequently (26% each) associated with the United States were: 1) characteristics such as its wealth, size, and beauty; 2) American values and democracy; and 3) American people both in general traits and by specific people such as political figures or pop-stars.
- 91 percent of students stated that they consider their view of the American people as either "generally" or "strongly favorable."
- 82 percent of students agreed with the statement, *Americans have friendly attitudes towards people of my country*, which indicates that most students already held a positive perception of Americans at the beginning of their exchange experience.

By the end of the FLEX program:

- Respondents indicated that their knowledge and understanding of *American values and culture* (94%) was either "beyond basic" or "advanced", as well as, *daily life in the United States* (98%). Both of which are statistically significant increases (see Table 6).

- The percentage of respondents who reported favorable views of the United States government in the post survey held fairly steady with only a slight decrease when compared to the pre survey (71% versus 70%).
- 69 percent of respondents were in agreement that the United States government was a trustworthy partner for their home country, which is a 4 percent decrease in the number of respondents who agreed prior to the program.
- Respondents developed a slightly more favorable view towards the American people which is evident in the small increase compared to the number of respondents who reported this view in the pre survey (91% versus 93%).
- 89 percent of respondents considered their life with their host family as satisfying.

In Their Own Words...

- *"The best experiences were that I met different people with different point of view to the world, which helped me to become more understandable." (Kyrgyzstan)*
- *"Becoming a part of another culture. I more deeply understood the similarities and the differences between America and my country." (Ukraine)*
- *"It was a great chance to see life from a different point of view, to see other ways of thinking and lifestyles, communicating with Americans and other exchange students from all over the world, seeing different cultures..." (Russia)*
- *"The best thing...is being around people, communicate with them in their native language,...to be able talk with people and just have fun with teenagers from other country, it's been a great experience for me." (Ukraine)*
- *"The most important experience for me is meeting a very special person, an awesome friend. I never thought that I would be able to relay to any American as a real friend." (Ukraine)*

Tables 6, 7 and 8 show the key variables related to the respondents' perceptions of the United States government and the American People. The only variables that had any change applied to the respondents' understanding of culture and daily life in the United States. These changes in values also happen to be statistically significant increases, and therefore support the idea that these positive changes were most likely a direct result of the students' participation in the FLEX program, and by chance.

TABLE 6

Understanding	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change ²
U.S. values and culture	3.45	4.47	↑ +1.02
Daily life in the U.S.	3.46	4.76	↑ +1.30

¹ 1=No Knowledge, 2=Less Than Basic, 3=Basic Knowledge, 4=Beyond Basic, 5=Advanced Knowledge

² Arrows represent the positive change of those variables with statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$

TABLE 7

Views	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change
U.S. government	0.85	0.81	-0.04
American People	1.32	1.36	+0.04

¹-2=Strongly unfavorable, -1=Generally unfavorable, 0=Neither favorable nor unfavorable, 1=Generally favorable, 2=Strongly favorable

TABLE 8

Views	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change
U.S. government is a trustworthy partner for my country	0.92	0.86	-0.06

¹-2=Strongly Disagree, -1=Disagree, 0=Neither agree nor disagree, 1=Agree, 2=Strongly Agree

TOLERANCE, SOCIAL JUSTICE, AND EQUALITY

Although not mandated as a program goal, raising students' awareness of tolerance and social justice through community activities and networks is nevertheless, a sought after result from program participation. This result was evident in the statistically significant increases of students who held positive views on tolerance, justice, and equality (see Table 9 and 10).

In the pre-program survey:

- Students believed the most important rights that an individual should have in society were: *receive an education* (98%), *have acceptable health care* (96%), *having a job* (96%), *freedom of speech* (95%), and *have access to information* (94%).

At the end of the FLEX program:

- FLEX respondents were in agreement that an individual should have the right in society to: *receive an education* (99%), *have acceptable health care* (99%), *have a job* (98%), *freedom of speech* (97%), *have acceptable housing* (96%), *access to information* (96%), and *be considered equal under law regardless* (96%).
- 30 percent more respondents agreed with an individual's right in society to *practice any religion*, which was the largest increase from the pre-survey.

- 80 percent of respondents considered their understanding of *religious and ethnic diversity in the United States* as “beyond basic” or “advanced”; a statistically significant increase.
- Respondents were in strongest agreement with the idea that in society, *ethnic minorities should have equal opportunities* (96%), while slightly more (97%) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement, *in society men and women should have equal opportunities*.
- 61 percent of respondents reported that they were involved in civic or political activism to either “some” or a “great extent” during their time in the United States.

In Their Own Words...

- “[The best thing about this experience was the] new knowledge, which I obtained about...tolerance to people of another religion and from other countries...” (Russia)
- “[The experience] gave me an opportunity to grow up and to learn a lot about communicating with different people, accept people no matter what they look like or behave.” (Russia)
- “As I shared traditions, culture in my country I get to know and understand traditions of other cultures, as USA is a country that united people of different ethnicities.” (Kazakhstan)
- “I liked best being exposed to unity in diversity, which makes me feel, that the world of the future will be based on this principle.” (Moldova)
- “My experience in the U.S. made my world-vision broader and more tolerant.” (Azerbaijan)

Tables 9 and 10 illustrate the key variables that are associated with the concepts of tolerance, social justice, and equality. Both tables indicate that each of these key variables had statistically significant increases in their values, which greatly supports the idea that these positive changes were as a direct result of the students’ participation in the FLEX program, and not due to chance. The most significant of which was the respondents’ understanding of religious and ethnic diversity in the United States.

TABLE 9

Understanding	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change ²
Religious and ethnic diversity in the U.S.	3.02	4.15	↑ +1.13

¹ 1=No Knowledge, 2=Less Than Basic, 3=Basic Knowledge, 4=Beyond Basic, 5=Advanced Knowledge

² Arrows represent the positive change of the variable with statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$

TABLE 10

In society:	Mean ¹		
	Pre	Post	Change ²
Men and women should have equal opportunities	1.60	1.78	↑ +0.18
Men and women should share family responsibilities	1.30	1.54	↑ +0.24
Ethnic minorities should have equal opportunities	1.46	1.80	↑ +0.34
People with disabilities should have equal opportunities	1.50	1.60	↑ +0.10
Religious minorities should have equal opportunities	1.41	1.68	↑ +0.27

¹ -2=Strongly Disagree, -1=Disagree, 0=Neither agree nor disagree, 1=Agree, 2=Strongly Agree

² Arrows represent the positive change of those variables with statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$

LEADERSHIP

Fostering the growth of each student's abilities and skills in regards to leadership is an essential component to the FLEX program. Students were asked to do self assessments of various leadership skills both prior to their FLEX participation and shortly before their return home. For many of the skills, FLEX respondents rated themselves much higher at the end of the program than prior to their participation, and these changes were found to be statistically significant.

Before starting the program:

- Nearly 33 percent of students hoped to gain some level of personal growth from their experience including maturity, confidence, and independence; all of which are considered qualities one might expect in a leader; while 8 percent of students specifically mentioned their ability to become a leader.
- 71 percent of respondents felt they could reach their goal to become a leader.

In the post survey:

- Students' leadership skills that had statistically significant increases in the percentage of students who rated themselves as "good" or "excellent" were in: self-reliance, public-speaking, listening to others, expressing ideas, tolerance, leading a team, flexibility, problem-solving, discussing beliefs, and willing to make changes in the community (see *Table 11*).
- Out of all leadership skills, respondents considered their strongest skills to be in: self-reliance, flexibility, and discussing beliefs, which all had at least 97 percent of respondents report their skill level to be either "good" or "excellent".
- The skills that respondents reported the biggest improvements in since the pre survey were: discussing beliefs, tolerance, and flexibility.

Using their improved skills:

- 91 percent of respondents report that as a direct result of their participation in the program, they will take on a leadership role or position in their communities.
- In addition, 93 percent of respondents also felt that because of the FLEX program, they would organize new activities or projects in their communities.

In Their Own Words...

- *"Another important thing is that I became a lot more independent and I became a true leader, in every meaning of this word."* (Ukraine)
- *"[The best part about my experience was] being able to mature, become more independent and develop my personal skills."* (Ukraine)
- *"Here [in the U.S.] I had to make decisions on my own and this taught me how to be an adult and a good leader."* (Georgia)
- *"I learnt the true meaning of volunteering...what it takes to be a leader."* (Ukraine)

Table 11 presents the key variables that assess students' leadership skills. The table indicates that most key variables that relate to this topic had a statistically significant increase in their value. It can be stated, with a 95 percent degree of certainty that these increases were a direct result of the students' participation in the FLEX program, and not due to chance.

TABLE 11

Leadership Skills	Mean¹		
	Pre	Post	Change²
Self-reliance	3.40	3.68	↑ +0.28
Public speaking	3.12	3.38	↑ +0.26
Listening to others	3.44	3.53	↑ +0.09
Expressing ideas	3.34	3.51	↑ +0.17
Being tolerant of people different from you	3.15	3.59	↑ +0.44
Motivating others	3.10	3.28	↑ +0.18
Being flexible	3.26	3.68	↑ +0.42
Solving problems	3.36	3.53	↑ +0.17
Discussing beliefs	3.18	3.67	↑ +0.49
Willing to make changes	3.17	3.53	↑ +0.36
Critical thinking	N/A ³	3.50	N/A

¹ 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent

² Arrows represent the positive change of those variables with statistical significance at the $p \leq .05$

³ Changes to the FLEX survey instruments were made mid-way through the academic year. Therefore this statement was not part of the pre-survey at the time of administration.

FUTURE PLANS AND GENERATING LASTING TIES

As part of the FLEX program, students are expected to take the knowledge and experience from the program and use it to work towards creating change in their home countries. Similarly, it is important for these students to generate lasting ties with those they meet during the program, such as fellow exchange participants as well as host family and friends.

Upon their return home:

- 95 percent of respondents stated that they will share their experience and knowledge gained from the FLEX program by giving presentations to their community, neighborhood, school, or university.
- In addition, 83 percent of respondents' report that they intend to share their experience and knowledge through participation in media interviews.
- Many respondents also intend on using social media outlets to share their knowledge and experience, such as creating a website (33%) and writing blogs (60%).
- FLEX respondents are most likely to stay in touch with: their host families (97%), other FLEX participants (95%), and students from their host high school (91%).
- 97 percent of respondents plan on participating in FLEX alumni activities.
- 62 percent of respondents stated that they will establish a new organization in their communities.
- 86 percent of respondents intend to support economic rights and social justice initiatives.

In Their Own Words...

- *"Now that I have such knowledge I am willing to teach my country and my people how to be successful."* (Kyrgyzstan)
- *"I think that the Civic Education Workshop...gave me many ideas. I am going to do everything for my country for its development and improvement."* (Armenia)
- *"Now I'm not just an Azerbaijani, I'm citizen of the world, and I really feel that way."* (Azerbaijan)
- *"I am willing help my country to become a better place."* (Georgia)

IMPORTANT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Respondents collectively reported that the three most important accomplishments of their FLEX exchange experience in the United States were the following:

- Increased my understanding of American society, people, and culture (81%);
- Shared my culture with others (47%); and
- Improved my English (39%)

These are also the most important reasons students stated for wanting to go to the United States before beginning the program.

- 10 percent of respondents identified the best thing about their entire exchange experience as the “life experience” that the FLEX program provided them.

In Their Own Words...

- “[FLEX] opened a window into a magic world of new opportunities and new life...” (Ukraine)
- “I had a great lesson of true democracy and learned about community, how to make positive changes in society...” (Tajikistan)
- “[The FLEX program] is a great way to establish peace around the world, communicate with people of different views and understanding of life...” (Ukraine)
- “The best thing is to be able to see the life from different size, to be able to break the boundaries of your mind and to see that there is different style life.” (Russia)
- “This program changed me, and some of my beliefs, and goals that I was planning to achieve. Now I have a strong desire to be a diplomat, and help our countries be in the best relationship that could ever be. I have a desire to make a difference in the lives of people in my country and in the lives of American people.” (Kyrgyzstan)

PROJECT DESIGN

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

The survey instruments were designed by E-GOALS staff that are a part of the Evaluation Division in ECA, and were approved by the Youth Programs Division of the Citizen Exchanges Office. Staff from the grantee organization, American Councils administered the pre-program survey between June and August of 2006 during the students' pre-departure orientations. The post-program survey was electronically administered to the same cohort between April and May of 2007, via a hyperlink which was distributed to students by their local coordinators.

There were 2,083 validated survey responses in total (1,180 pre-survey responses and 903 post-survey responses). The response rate to the post-survey was a 14 percent increase from the previous year's post-survey. In addition, the average survey completion time for the pre-program survey was 35 minutes, and 16 minutes for the post-survey.

The survey instruments covered a wide range of topics: democracy and freedom, youth civic engagement and volunteerism, United States government and the American people, tolerance and social justice, leadership, and future plans.

TABLE 1

FLEX Eurasian Participants	Total Population	Total Responses (N)	Response Rate
Pre Survey	1,200	1,180 ²	98.3%
Post Survey	1,152 ¹	903	78.4%

¹ 48 students did not complete the program due to an early return (12 involuntary, 36 voluntary)

² Of the total responses, 1,162 are confirmed finalists, the remaining 18 could not be confirmed as either finalists or alternates due to lack of information

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Pre-Program Survey²:

- Students completed an E-GOALS paper survey during their pre-departure orientation in their home countries.
- Of the 1,180 FLEX-Eurasian students who responded: Male 29%, Female 71%
- The majority of students (84%) were either 15 or 16 years old at the start of the program.
- Students primarily considered themselves as either Christian (60%) or Muslim (23%).
- More students possessed a public education (84%) than a private education background (11%); the remaining (5%) did not know which type of education background they had.
- Students came from urban areas within their country (62%) more so than those from rural areas (38%).
- The students represented 11 countries in Eurasia with the most coming from Russia (30%), Ukraine (26%), and Kazakhstan (9%).

Post-Program Survey¹:

- Respondents completed an E-GOALS electronic survey towards the end of their program shortly before returning home.
- Of the 903 FLEX respondents: Male 27%, Female 73%
- Most respondents were either 16 or 17 years old (87%) at the time of the post-survey.
- Respondents came from urban areas within their country (69%) compared to those from rural areas (31%).
- 11 countries were represented by those who responded, with the most coming from Russia (27%), Ukraine (27%) and Kazakhstan (8%).

² See appendices for full data tables and results

CONCLUSIONS

The findings demonstrate positive as well as significant changes in the attitudes, views, perceptions, and actions of the students. The FLEX program was successful in achieving the mandated goals of the program in order for students to:

- Acquire an understanding of important elements of a civil society.
- Serve as agents for change in their countries after they return home.
- Develop an appreciation for American culture.
- Interact with Americans and generate enduring ties.
- Teach Americans about the cultures of their home countries and teach citizens of their home countries about the United States.

Democracy and Freedom

As the data supports, most students came to the United States for the first time with what they considered to be only a basic understanding of our democracy and freedom. Yet, after being fully immersed in American culture for a full academic year, students were much more likely to consider themselves as very knowledgeable in these topical areas. There was a statistically significant increase in the number of students who expressed this sentiment, which is most evident in the improvement of students' knowledge of democracy. Students express on the post survey stronger agreement towards democratic values. In addition, students were in stronger agreement with the democratic values put forth in the post survey. In all, this may suggest that these reported changes are due, in direct part, to the students' participation in the FLEX program.

Civic Engagement and Volunteerism

Overall, FLEX students demonstrated a commitment to the program requirement to engage in activities that exposed them to community service and the idea of volunteering. Nearly all of the students who responded to the post survey were very active in these types of activities within their host communities, while many also considered those experiences to be very satisfying. The respondents' knowledge of civic engagement and volunteerism improved significantly, and most plan to share the knowledge and skills gained upon their return home. Subsequently, this may suggest that the FLEX program successfully introduced these concepts, enabling the students to serve as "agents of change".

Perceptions of United States Government and Citizens

Students' perceptions of both the United States government and the American people are one of the few areas in which there was little change. While students came into the

program already possessing a high favorability of the American people, their attitudes towards the United States government were not as high.

By the end of the program there was a small decrease in respondents who considered the United States Government to be trustworthy, compared to those students who viewed the United States Government favorably. In contrast, the number of students who had a favorable view of the American people did increase, albeit by a slight amount. This positive view is also reflected in respondents' reporting satisfaction towards their host families, as well as their social and academic lives. Furthermore, there were statistically significant increases in the number of students who reported a strong understanding of American values and daily life in the United States.

The lack of change, in respondents' views towards the United States Government, may suggest that this is an area that the FLEX program has yet to truly affect.

Tolerance, Social Justice, and Equality

The FLEX program does not mandate specific curricula or inclusion of curricula addressing tolerance, social justice, and equality. The key findings of this study indicate significant change in several areas. This is most evident in the level of knowledge respondents expressed having in regards to the religious and ethnic diversity in the United States. In addition, there was a significant increase in the number of respondents who were more likely to "strongly agree" with the concepts of equal opportunity for both religious and ethnic minorities, as well as persons with disabilities. Altogether, these changes may reflect a direct impact that the FLEX program has on the students' attitudes towards tolerance and equality.

Leadership

There is strong statistical evidence to support a significant impact on the FLEX students' leadership abilities. In the post survey, respondents were much more likely to assess themselves as "excellent" in a variety of leadership characteristics. This was most evident in the areas of tolerance, flexibility, and discussing beliefs. Not only do respondents considered themselves as strong leaders, but nearly all plan to take what they have learned in the FLEX program and assume a leadership role upon returning home. This improvement may be due in part to the students' participation, and consequently, the FLEX program may effectively be developing a future generation of strong leaders.

Future Plans and Generating Lasting Ties

A major component of the program is the effect that participation will have on the students in the future. This relates to both their plans and continued personal connections. It is apparent that after the FLEX program, respondents plan to remain connected to people they met during their time in the United States, mostly those that they have bonded with and spent the most time with; their host family, other FLEX

participants, and students from their high schools. Also, respondents expressed their intentions to share their experience and the knowledge gained with others in their home countries in a variety of different ways such as giving presentations to their communities, creating websites, and writing blogs. In addition, nearly all respondents intend on participating in FLEX alumni activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS OR LESSONS LEARNED

Recommendations for improvement in program results can be classified in the following areas:

- Increase the intensity of program
- More structure provided to grantees
- Improve program administration
- Enhance the administration of the post-program survey
- Incorporate a follow-up assessment to the evaluation to identify long-term impact

Recommendation 1: Increase intensity of program

Based on the findings of this report, the FLEX students' attitudes are changing and there is improvement in their knowledge of several thematic program areas. Yet, there are areas of the program that could always be improved upon, and maximizing the best elements of the FLEX program is an essential first step.

Increasing the quantity of trips and activities with fellow FLEX participants was the most frequently mentioned recommendation by respondents for improving the FLEX program. Offering students with more opportunities to interact with community members and each other will make their experience more enriching. Activities that focus on learning about the history and culture of the United States will make more of an impact on their impressions of the United States, and will provide students the chance to share their own. The types of trips could include a variety of visits to different cities in the United States especially those beyond their host communities. Additional suggestions for the type of trips to include are to museums and historical sites. Likewise, more culturally related activities such as movie nights, and ethnically-styled potluck dinners would be ideal ways to bring FLEX students and community members together.

In addition, making the Civic Education workshop accessible to a larger number of students will provide students with the valuable experience and knowledge they might not necessarily gain elsewhere. Incorporating these ideas or similar ones could help to increase the intensity of the FLEX program.

Recommendation 2: More structure provided to grantees

Consideration should be given to providing grantees with more structured guidance about thematic areas and emphasis that still affords grantees with a degree of flexibility in how they implement and manage their individual programs. Too much flexibility in the program can cause vastly different experiences for the FLEX students that are managed by different grantees. Therefore, this type of guidance establishes a more

balanced structure and continuity across grantees, yet allows the flexibility grantees need to develop the components of their program.

Additionally, the sharing of ideas and lessons learned across each of the grantees would be a good place to start. Providing grantees the opportunity to share at cross-site meetings via conference calls, webinars, or other methods will only help strengthen the FLEX program. Individual grantees can then incorporate these new ideas into their own programming.

Recommendation 3: Improve program administration

In regards to program administration, several items fall under this section that could be examined. While most respondents were satisfied with their pre-departure orientation, several expressed this as a component that needed improvement. Specifically, respondents expressed the need to extend the orientation session, provide more information on expectations regarding the program, culture, life-style, climate and environment. Respondents also stated the need for more helpful “survival tips” on how to adapt and cope with different types of situations. Finally, involving the students’ peers, specifically FLEX alumni in the pre-orientation sessions could be very beneficial to the students. As alumni of the FLEX program, they can provide a more personal account of what students need to know and what to expect.

Respondents were not as satisfied with either the mid-year or end-of-year orientations compared to the pre-orientation. Gaining more specific feedback and suggestions from FLEX alumni might help to identify what additional information students might want to hear during these orientations and offer suggestion on ways to improve the sessions. It is conceivable that the dissatisfaction of these orientations that are hosted by the grantees are due to the sessions not providing all of the information that students are looking for, or that they are not presenting the information in an appealing or interesting manner.

Another frequently reported recommendation involved the students’ local coordinators. A student’s local coordinator was also one of the more frequently mentioned aspects of the entire exchange experience that respondents liked least. Moreover, the data reveals that the respondents who reported being dissatisfied with their local coordinator were among the majority who recommended the need to improve their local coordinator’s program management and practices. This is supported by comments addressing accessibility and communication issues with their coordinator. Grantees may need to develop a process that ensures that coordinators are consistently checking in, and are available for students concerns and questions, as well as actively coordinating activities for their students. If there is not a system already in place to evaluate a local coordinators performance, then one should also be developed.

Recommendation 4: Enhance post-program survey administration

This year's post-program survey revealed a significant increase in the number of students who were able to participate in the survey compared to the previous year. Each student participating in the FLEX program should have the opportunity to participate in the post survey. However, survey participation is dependent on each student's Internet access and awareness. In order to ensure each student completes the post survey, any factors that may be prohibiting full participation need to be identified so that feasible solutions can be implemented. For example, in cases where Internet access is limited, an alternative survey administration method is available. Another option would be the development of a more efficient follow-up reminder to non-respondents. By enhancing the post-program survey administration, a higher response rate can be obtained, which in turn can lead to more informative data.

Recommendation 5: Incorporate a follow-up assessment to the evaluation

To measure the long-term impact of the FLEX program on students, a follow-up assessment should be conducted. This type of assessment will gather information regarding the impact that the program has had on students by determining the types of personal and institutional collaborations and actions the students have engaged in since their exchange experience. The follow-up survey is conducted eight to twelve months after the exchange participant returns home.

The difference between the post and the follow-up assessment is that while the post focuses on and compares what the participants state they intend to do, the follow-up assessment reports what they have actually done since returning home. The data collected during the follow-up assessment would provide actual examples of students' engagement in positive change and action that would substantiate the long-term impact of the FLEX program such as the creation of satellite FLEX alumni or preparatory stations. In addition, these kinds of institutional changes that students engage in are the types of information which will showcase the effectiveness of the FLEX program at enabling the participants to become agents of change in their countries.

Prepared For:
U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Citizen Exchanges Office: Youth Program Division

Prepared By:
U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs
Office of Policy and Evaluation



APPENDICES

Pre & Post Survey

Data Tables

APPENDIX A: PRE SURVEY 2006-2007 RESULTS

In total 1,180 surveys were completed by FLEX students during their pre-departure orientations. The table below summarizes the population by the respondent's host/placement organization. It should be noted that 221 respondents did not answer this question, and the reason is most likely due to confusion with the students not knowing who their placement organization is at the time of the pre-orientation.

<i>Host/Placement Organizations</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Sample Size for each grantee</i>
AYUSA	17.4	167	200
PIE	14.5	139	175
CCI	13.7	131	165
ASSE	13.0	125	150
ASPECT Foundation	7.8	75	100
PAX	7.7	74	80
CIEE	5.8	56	75
Nacel Open Door	4.5	43	50
AFS-USA, Inc.	3.6	35	45
AIFS/AYA	3.6	35	40
World Link	3.6	35	40
American Councils	2.8	27	40
4-H Foundation (World Wise)	1.8	17	40
TOTAL¹	100%	959	1,200

¹ 221 respondents did not provide a response to this question

The following represent the three most important reasons that FLEX students gave for going to the United States: to increase their understanding of American society, people, and culture (85.8%), to share their culture with others (57.2%) and to improve their English (45.3%).

<i>Three most important reasons for going to U.S.:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
To increase my understanding of American society, people, and culture	85.8	1,012
To share my culture with others	57.2	675
To improve my English	45.3	535
To make friends with students from other countries	32.5	383
To make friends with American students	32.5	383
To acquire leadership skills	25.7	303
To improve my education	15.7	185
Other	4.2	49

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who chose each reason as one of their top three reasons.

Students stated what they hoped to gain by living in the United States. Most respondents (60%) hoped to either make new friends, or increase their understanding of American culture, people, etc.

<i>What do you hope to gain by living in the U.S. for 1 year?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Make new friends	60.7	706
Increase own understanding	60.1	699
Improve English	44.6	519
Personal growth	32.6	379
Increase others understanding	23.9	278
Life experience	17.0	198
Educational experience	13.0	151
Leadership	8.1	94
Travel	4.7	55
Other	3.8	44
Use or share what I've learned	2.6	30
Participate in sports/activities	1.7	20

¹ 17 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Forty-five percent of FLEX students stated that they thought adapting to life in the United States would be *neither difficult nor easy*. Twenty nine percent stated the transition would be 'difficult' while 27 percent stated it would be 'easy'.

<i>How difficult do you think it will be to adapt to life in the US</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Neither difficult nor easy	44.8	508
Somewhat Difficult	27.6	313
Somewhat Easy	20.9	237
Very Easy	5.6	64
Very Difficult	1.0	11
TOTAL	100%	1,133
MEAN¹	0.03	

¹ -2=Very difficult, -1=Somewhat difficult, 0=Neither difficult nor easy, 1=Somewhat easy, 2 = Very easy

Most respondents (86%) said they were not discouraged from participating.

<i>Did anyone discourage you from participating?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
No	86.9	1,019
Yes	13.1	153
TOTAL¹	100%	1,172

¹ 8 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Forty-four percent of respondents stated that the reason people tried to discourage them from attending the FLEX program was because they were afraid, we're going to miss them or simply did not want the student to go.

<i>Why did they discourage you?¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Don't want to go/Afraid/Be missed	43.8	67
Educational reasons	19.0	29
Afraid	10.5	16
Length of stay/Distance	9.8	15
Other	9.2	14
Though it would be difficult/ not useful	7.8	12
Distance	3.9	6
Age	2.6	4
Come back changed	2.0	3
Don't understand	2.0	3
Envy	2.0	3

¹ 5 respondents did not provide a reason or did not know

Eighty-two percent of respondents reported they had never been involved in FLEX alumni projects.

<i>Ever been involved in FLEX alumni projects?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
No	81.9	944
Yes	18.1	209
TOTAL¹	100%	1,153

¹ 27 respondents did not provide a response to this question

About half of FLEX students (49.8%) had most recently completed their 10th year of education. Another 33 percent had completed their 9th year, and 11 percent their 11th year.

<i>Year of Education</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
10 th year	49.8	585
9 th year	33.2	390
11 th year	11.2	132
8 th year	4.9	58
12 th year	0.9	10
TOTAL¹	100%	1,175

¹ 5 respondents did not provide a response to this question

A majority of respondents (84%) went to public school.

<i>Public vs. Private School</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Public	84.0	969
Private	11.3	133
Do not Know	5.7	67
TOTAL¹	100%	1,169

¹ 11 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Respondents indicated that their free time is spent time with friends (95%), listening to music (91%), reading (79%) and helping at home (76%).

<i>What activities do you participate in during your free time?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Spend time with friends	95.4	1,126
Listen to music	90.7	1,070
Read	78.6	927
Help at home	76.4	901
Play sports	72.3	853
Watch TV	69.8	824
Study	65.3	771
Go to movies	54.7	645
E-mail/chat	54.1	638
Enjoy nature	48.8	576
Shopping	45.1	532
Surf the internet	39.4	465
Listen to radio	36.9	436
Play computer games	35.7	421
Hobbies	23.2	274

¹ Respondents were allowed to select multiple items

Eighty percent of respondents were involved in organized activities or clubs in their home countries.

<i>Are you involved in any organized activities?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Yes	79.5	914
No, no activities available	12.4	142
No, I am not able	4.1	47
No, I am not interested	4.0	46
TOTAL¹	100%	1,149

¹ 31 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Respondents were most likely to report that they were involved to either “some” or a “great extent” in school organizations (75%) and culture (73%), followed closely by sports (68%) and community service (63%).

<i>To what extent are you involved in the following activities?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
School organizations	74.5	855	2.07
Culture	72.6	823	2.02
Sports	67.5	766	1.87
Community service	63.0	709	1.77
Religious activities	16.8	185	0.69

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who were involved to some or to a great extent

² 0=Not at all, 1=To a small extent, 2 = To some extent, 3=To a great extent

While participating in the activities in the table above, respondents reported that to “some” or a “great extent” they planned activities and events (67%), served in leadership positions (67%), lead activities and events (64%) and attended meetings (61%).

<i>To what extent do you do the following?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Plan activities and events	67.2	793	1.86
Serve in a leadership position	67.1	762	1.81
Lead activities and events	64.1	718	1.76
Attend meetings	60.5	714	1.72
Train other participants or members	37.1	416	1.21
Started a new group or organization	27.6	306	0.87

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who were involved to some or to a great extent

² 0=Not at all, 1=To a small extent, 2 = To some extent, 3=To a great extent

Ninety percent of respondents most often agreed that they had many choices in life; 81 percent reported that they could influence people around them; 72 percent indicated that they could make a difference in their communities, while 70 percent indicated the same in regards to their families.

<i>As an individual:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
I feel I have many choices in life.	89.6	1,053	1.47
I feel I can influence people around me.	80.9	945	1.06
I feel I can make a difference in my community.	71.6	840	0.89
I feel I can make a difference in my family.	69.9	818	0.81

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement.

² -2=Strongly disagree, -1=Somewhat disagree, 0=Neither agree nor disagree, 1=Somewhat agree, 2 = Strongly agree

Respondents considered their strongest leadership abilities to be self-refinance (95%), problem-solving (95%), listening to other people's suggestions or concerns (93%), and expressing ideas and feelings (93%).

Personal leadership ratings:	Percentage %¹	Frequency	Mean²
Listening to other people's suggestions or concerns	93.4	1,097	3.44
Being self-reliant, being independent, relying on yourself	95.4	1,120	3.4
Solving problems	94.9	1,104	3.36
Expressing ideas and feelings	93.0	1,088	3.34
Being flexible	88.5	1,018	3.26
Discussing your beliefs/values	86.0	990	3.18
Willing to make changes in your community	84.5	984	3.17
Accepting people different from you	84.5	975	3.15
Speaking in public	84.5	992	3.12
Leading a team and motivating others	81.7	951	3.1

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who said they were excellent or good

² 4=Excellent, 3=Good, 2=Fair, 1=Poor

Respondents were most likely to either "somewhat" or "strongly agree" that men and women should have equal opportunities for (92%), and that people with disabilities should also have equal opportunities (88%).

In society...	Percentage %¹	Frequency	Mean²
Men and women should have equal opportunities	92.3	1,083	1.6
People with disabilities (mentally or physically challenged) should have equal opportunities	88.3	1,036	1.5
Ethnic minorities should have equal rights	86.7	1,011	1.46
Religious minorities should have equal rights	84.7	987	1.41
Men and women should equally share family responsibilities	86.0	1,010	1.3

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement.

² -2=Strongly disagree, -1=Somewhat disagree, 0=Neither agree nor disagree, 1=Somewhat agree, 2 = Strongly agree

Respondents indicated that the rights they deemed as the most important for an individual to have in society as: receive an education (98%), acceptable health care (96%), having a job (96%), and having freedom of speech (95%).

<i>Rights of an individual in society</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Receive an education	98.0	1,154	1.85
Have acceptable health care	95.8	1,124	1.78
Have a job	95.6	1,127	1.76
Have freedom of speech	95.0	1,017	1.67
Have access to information	93.6	1,095	1.54
Be considered equal under the law regardless of age, gender, ethnicity or religion	86.8	1,018	1.45
Have acceptable housing	84.4	882	1.27
Travel freely to other countries	83.3	976	1.24
Practice any religion	57.1	668	0.73

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who either somewhat or very important with the statement.

² -2=Very unimportant, -1=Somewhat unimportant, 0=Neutral, 1=Somewhat important, 2=Very important

Most respondents were in agreement with all of the democratic principles, but the most (96%) agreed that all citizens in a country should equal rights and protections under the law, regardless of circumstances, while ninety-one percent agreed with the concept that individuals and organizations have the rights to free speech and to voice opposition.

<i>Extent of agreement</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
All citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law, regardless of circumstances	95.9	1,124	1.7
Individuals and organizations have the right to free speech and to voice opposition	91.0	1,059	1.4
The Rule of Law is fundamental to a functioning democracy	89.7	1,093	1.38
Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy	86.6	1,008	1.33
An independent media is important to the free flow of information	86.6	1,005	1.27
Voting is important because real decisions are made in elections	84.4	985	1.16
Democratic principles enhance the workplace. Supervisors should incorporate democratic principles into their management practices.	74.1	847	0.98

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents rated who either agreed or strongly agreed.

² -2=Strongly disagree, -1=Disagree, 0=Neither agree nor disagree, 1=Agree, 2=Strongly Agree

Eighty-two percent of respondents agreed that Americans were friendly to people of their home countries, while 60 percent agreed Americans feel free to express their personal opinions. Attitudes toward whether most Americans are wealthy were mixed with only 40 percent who considered most Americans as wealthy.

<i>What do you think of Americans?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Americans have friendly attitudes towards people of my country.	82.1	963	1.22
Americans express their personal opinions, even if they contradict those of authority.	60.1	701	0.65
Most Americans are wealthy.	40.2	466	0.25

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement.

² -2=Strongly disagree, -1=Somewhat disagree, 0=Neither agree nor disagree, 1=Somewhat agree, 2 = Strongly agree

Seventy-three percent of respondents reported that they viewed the United States government as a trustworthy partner for their home countries.

<i>How do you view the U.S. government and its relationship with your home country?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
The United States government is a trustworthy partner for my country.	72.5	849	0.92

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement

² -2 = Strongly disagree, -1 = Disagree, 0 = Neither agree nor disagree, 1 = Agree, 2 = Strongly agree

FLEX respondents stated that they viewed the American people favorably (91%), while they still viewed the United States government favorably (71%) it was to a lesser extent.

<i>How do you view the following?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
American people	90.6	1,069	1.32
U.S. government	71.2	840	0.85

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who held a favorable view

² 2 = Strongly favorable, 1 = Generally favorable, 0 = Neither favorable nor unfavorable, -1 = Generally unfavorable, -2 = Strongly unfavorable

Slightly more than half of FLEX respondents reported that they had at least beyond basic knowledge of daily life in the United States (51%), while 48 percent indicated the same level of knowledge in regards to freedom of speech and values and culture.

<i>Rate knowledge of topics:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Freedom of speech and the press in the United States	48.2	562	3.49
Daily life in the United States	50.7	592	3.46
United States values and culture	47.7	551	3.45
Voluntary community service	36.0	416	3.11
Religious and ethnic diversity in the United States	30.8	359	3.02
United States democracy	26.9	314	3.0
United States economy	24.7	288	2.89

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who rated their knowledge as either beyond or advanced.

² 1=No knowledge, 2=Less than basic, 3=Basic knowledge, 4=Beyond Basic, 5 = Advanced knowledge

The three most common things that respondents indicated that they first thought of about the United States were: its characteristics such as beauty, friendliness, and wealth (26%); American values and the idea of democracy (26%); and the American people in general where they either named a specific American such as a pop star or spoke in general terms (26%).

<i>First thing that comes to mind when you think of United States?¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Characteristics	26.0	307
Values/Democracy	26.0	307
People	25.5	301
Things/organizations	16.7	197
Monuments/Symbols	14.8	175
Location	12.5	148
Culture/History	10.6	125
Other	4.3	51
Visit Specific	3.7	44
Politics/Policy	3.2	38
Language	1.2	14

¹23 respondents did not provide a response to this question

The items that respondents most frequently mentioned as the first thing that came to their minds about their own countries were: personal such as family, friends or their home(28%); their countries people in both general terms or in a specific person such as an athlete or politician(21%), and their countries culture or history (20%).

<i>First thing that comes to mind when you think of own country?¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Personal	28.0	330
People	20.6	243
Culture/History	20.2	238
Things/organizations	17.5	206
Location	11.9	141
Other	10.3	121
Values/Democracy	4.2	50
Politics/Policy	3.6	43
Monument/Symbol	3.1	37
Language	0.8	10

¹ 21 respondents did not provide a response to this question

The goals that respondents considered the most important in their personal lives were: going to a university (95%), having a family (94%), having a rewarding job (94%), and having an opportunity to interact with people in foreign countries (94%).

<i>Please indicate how important the following goals are for your personal life:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Going to university	94.7	1,199	3.8
Having a family	93.5	1,060	3.72
Having a rewarding job	94.4	1,085	3.69
Having the opportunity to interact with people in foreign countries	94.1	1,076	3.52
Being active in community affairs	90.1	1,034	3.39
Becoming a leader	84.3	966	3.25
Having a lot of money	83.4	984	3
Having my own business	74.6	837	3
Having a career in government	49.7	545	2.5

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who said the goals were very or somewhat important.

² 4=Very Important, 3=Somewhat Important, 2=Somewhat Unimportant, 1=Very Unimportant

Out of all of the goals listed, respondents indicated that they felt they could reach the following the most: going to a university (98%), having a family (95%), and having a rewarding job (93%).

<i>Do you think you can reach these goals?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Going to university	98.4	1,161
Having a family	95.2	1,123
Having a rewarding job	92.9	1,096
Having the opportunity to interact with people in foreign countries	84.7	1,000
Being active in community affairs	73.4	866
Becoming a leader	70.9	837
Having a lot of money	54.9	648
Having my own business	54.2	639
Having a career in government	26.8	316

¹ Respondents were allowed to select multiple items

More respondents attributed the following reasons to why they won a scholarship to the FLEX program: they were able to live in another country (85%), they make friends easily (76%) and they are a good person (65%).

<i>Why do you think you won this scholarship?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
I am able to live in another country with another family	85.1	1,004
I make friends easily	75.8	894
I am a good person	65.2	769
I will be a good cultural ambassador	59.6	703
I speak English well	54.5	643
I am involved in school activities	51.6	609
I am fortunate	45.3	535
I am a very good student	39.2	463
My family is well connected	19.5	230
I come from an honorable family	19.5	230
Other	12.0	142
I was selected by my school	8.6	101
Do Not Know	2.4	28

¹ Respondents were allowed to select multiple items

FLEX students were more likely to come from urban (72%) than rural areas (38%).

Geographic Location:	Percentage %	Frequency
Another major city in my country other than the capital	44.1	509
A small city, town or rural location in my country	38.3	442
My country's capital	17.6	203
TOTAL¹	100%	1,154

¹ 26 Respondents did not answer this question

FLEX students came from eleven different countries with Russia (29.7%) and Ukraine (26.1%) bearing the highest percentages.

Home Country:	Percentage %	Frequency
Russia	29.7	345
Ukraine	26.1	303
Kazakhstan	8.6	100
Kyrgyzstan	6.3	73
Turkmenistan	5.3	61
Azerbaijan	4.4	51
Georgia	4.3	50
Tajikistan	4.3	50
Armenia	4.1	48
Moldova	3.9	45
Uzbekistan	3.0	35
TOTAL¹	100%	1,161

¹ 19 respondents did not provide a response to this question in the pre

Respondents are predominately between the ages of 15 and 17 (99%).

Age	Percentage %	Frequency
16	53.0	587
15	30.7	340
17	15.9	176
18	0.3	3
14	0.1	1
TOTAL¹	100%	1,107

¹ 73 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Seventy-one percent of FLEX students were female.

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Female	71.4	831
Male	28.6	333
TOTAL¹	100%	1,164

¹ 16 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Respondents were from a vast array of ethnicities, with the most reporting either Russian (31%) or Ukrainian (24%).

<i>What is your ethnicity?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Russian	30.9	346
Ukrainian	24.0	268
Kazak	5.6	63
Kyrgyz	4.5	50
Azerbaijan	3.8	42
Tajikistan	3.7	41
Georgian	3.6	40
Turkmen	3.4	38
Tatar	3.1	35
Armenian	2.6	29
Moldovan	2.6	29
Caucasian	2.4	27
Uzbek	2.4	27
European	1.9	21
Christian	1.2	13
Korean	1.1	12
TOTAL¹	100%	1,146

¹ 62 respondents did not provide a response to this question

FLEX students most often identified themselves as either Christian (60%) or Muslim (23%).

<i>Which religious group, if any, do you consider yourself a member of or feel closest to?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Christian	60.8	706
Muslim	23.2	269
None	8.3	96
Not close to any group	3.3	38
Other	1.4	17
Sikh	1.3	15
Buddhist	1.1	13
Jewish	0.3	4
Baha'i	0.2	2
Shinto	0.1	1
TOTAL¹	100%	1,161

¹ 19 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Seventy-three percent of FLEX students' fathers have at least a university degree.

<i>What is the highest level of education your father has?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
University – first degree	57.2	635
Technical	19.6	218
University – post graduate degree	15.6	173
Secondary (complete or incomplete)	5.8	64
Primary education (complete or incomplete)	1.4	16
No formal education	0.4	4
TOTAL¹	100%	1,110

¹ 70 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Sixty-seven percent of FLEX students' mothers have at least a university degree.

<i>What is the highest level of education your mother has?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
University – first degree	62.4	724
University – post graduate degree	18.1	210
Technical	13.1	152
Secondary (complete or incomplete)	4.7	55
Primary education (complete or incomplete)	1.2	14
No formal education	0.5	5
TOTAL¹	100%	1,160

¹ 20 respondents did not provide a response to this question

Respondents considered themselves well-versed in several languages. The most common are Russian (90%), and English (86%)

<i>Which languages do you speak well enough in to communicate?¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Russian	90.4	1,067
English	86.0	1,015
Ukrainian	24.9	294
German	11.2	132
French	8.4	99
Kazakh	5.7	67
Other	5.5	65
Turkish	5.1	60
Kyrgyz	4.3	51
Tajik	3.8	45
Turkmen	3.4	40
Azerbaijani	3.4	40
Georgian	3.1	37
Romanian	2.8	33
Armenian	2.7	32
Spanish	2.2	26
Polish	1.9	23
Tatar	1.9	22

¹ 14 Respondents did not provide a response.

Thirty-nine percent of respondents have never traveled outside their home countries, while Europe was the most traveled to region (37%). Only three percent have been to the United States.

<i>What regions have you traveled to?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Never traveled outside my home country	38.6	456
Europe	37.3	440
Asia	19.2	226
Other	10.4	123
Africa	6.2	73
Middle East/North Africa	4.6	54
United States of America	3.1	36
Oceania (Australia, New Zealand)	0.9	11
Latin America	0.3	3

¹ Respondents were allowed to select multiple items

The only items not as common in the respondents homes were a computer (79%) or access to the internet (63%).

<i>Which of the following do you have in your home?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Television	98.1	1,157
Telephone	96.9	1,143
Radio	91.5	1,080
Mobile/cell phone	89.9	1,061
Computer	79.1	933
Internet access	63.8	753
None of the Above	0	0

¹ Respondents were allowed to select multiple items

APPENDIX B: POST SURVEY 2006-2007 RESULTS

Prior to the end of their 2006-2007 academic year FLEX students were asked to complete an E-GOALS on-line survey. The survey was developed to help gain insight into how spending a school year in the United States affected participants perceptions, opinions, and views on such things as the **American people, U.S. Government, American culture, democracy, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, civic engagement and social justice**, and how effective the overall program was at obtaining the goals it set forth. In total 903 students responded to the survey.

The table below shows the breakout by grantee organization for the students who responded to the post survey request.

Grantee¹	Percentage %	Frequency
CCI	17.5	158
PIE	15.7	142
AYUSA	15.3	138
ASSE	10.6	96
PAX	7.4	67
Nacel Open Door	5.4	49
ASPECT Foundation	5.2	47
CIEE	4.7	42
World Link	4.4	40
AIFS	4.0	36
American Councils	3.4	31
4-H Foundation (World Wise)	3.2	29
AFS-USA, Inc.	2.5	23
TOTAL	100%	898

¹ 5 Respondents did not provide a response

Respondents indicated that their top three accomplishments of the FLEX program were: increasing their understanding of American society, people and culture (81%), sharing their culture with others (47%) and improving their English (39%).

<i>Most important accomplishment of program:</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Increased my understanding of American society, people, and culture	81.3	734
Shared my culture with others	47.3	427
Improved my English	39.3	355
Improved my leadership skills	31.2	282
Made friends with American students	28.7	259
Learned about community service and volunteerism	25.6	231
Made friends with students from other countries	24.0	217
Promoted mutual understanding between Americans and foreigners	14.0	126
Other	6.9	62
Improved my education	4.4	40

Over half of FLEX students (56%) said adapting to life in the U.S. was easy while 17 percent said it was difficult.

<i>Adapting to life in the U.S. was:</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Somewhat easy	37.3	337
Neither easy nor difficult	27.3	246
Very easy	18.5	167
Somewhat difficult	15.3	138
Very difficult	1.6	14
TOTAL	100%	902
MEAN¹	0.56	

¹ -2=Very difficult, -1=Somewhat difficult, 0=Neither easy nor difficult, 1=Somewhat easy, 2=Very easy

Respondents were satisfied on average with all specific program components, particularly the pre-departure orientation (93%), their social life in the United States (89%), and their life with host families (88%). Respondents were the least satisfied with religious life in the United States (63%).

Satisfaction with Specific Program Components	Percentage %¹	Frequency	Mean²
Pre-Departure orientation	92.9	837	1.52
Life with host family	88.3	798	1.46
Social life in the U.S.	89.0	804	1.35
Academic life in the U.S.	83.9	756	1.2
FLEX program activities	78.5	709	1.09
End-year orientation	74.1	669	1.0
Relationship with local coordinator	75.5	680	1.0
Mid-year orientation	71.5	646	0.9
Religious life in the U.S.	63.1	569	0.8

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who were either satisfied or very satisfied with the statement.

² -2=Very dissatisfied, -1=Dissatisfied, 0=Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, 1=Satisfied, 2 = Very Satisfied

Respondents identified multiple things as being what they liked the best. The most frequently mentioned were in regards to the friendships that developed from the experience (34%), the opportunity to experience American society and culture first hand (32%), and the personal growth they saw in themselves (24%).

What did you like best about your experience?¹	Percentage %	Frequency
Friendships Formed	34.1	308
American Society & Culture	32.4	293
Personal Growth	23.5	212
Meeting New & Different People	22.5	203
Host Family	20.7	187
Sharing Own Culture	13.6	123
Traveling	12.5	113
School Experience	11.3	102
Opportunity to Learn & Try New Things	10.0	90
Life Experience	9.6	87
Improving English	8.7	79
Volunteering	6.4	58
Improve Leadership Skills	4.8	43
Participating in Sports & Clubs	4.3	39
Social Life	3.1	28
FLEX Trips & Workshops	2.3	21
Breaking Stereotypes	1.4	13
Religious Activities	1.3	12
"Everything"	1.2	11
Developed Better Appreciation	1.2	11

¹ 7 respondents did not provide a response to this question

45 respondents reported something else which fell under categories of < 1%

No topic was identified by a majority of respondents. More respondents said nothing than those who did. Of those who did identify a topic, 12 percent mentioned host family issues, and another 11 percent mentioned periodic moments of homesickness.

<i>What did you like least about your experience?¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Host Family Issues	12.0	108
Periods of Homesickness	11.4	103
Placement Organization Issues	7.9	71
Education Issues	6.1	55
Host Community Issues	5.6	51
Rules	5.3	48
Transportation Issues	5.0	45
Geographic Location	4.9	44
"Saying Goodbye"	4.8	43
Cultural Differences	4.8	43
Food & Weight Gain	4.1	37
Length of Program	3.4	31
Lack of Travel	3.0	27
Stereotypes	2.1	19
FLEX activities	1.7	15
Adjustment	1.6	14
Language Barrier	1.4	13
Religious Differences	1.3	12
Lack of Money	1.3	12

¹ 157 respondents did not have anything to report

60 respondents reported something else which fell under categories of < 1%

All but two respondents reported that they would recommend the FLEX program.

<i>Would you recommend FLEX?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Yes	99.8	899
No	0.2	2
TOTAL¹	100%	901

¹ 2 Respondents did not provide a response

Almost 23 percent of respondents either could not think of any recommendations for the FLEX program, or felt there was nothing to improve. Of the respondents who did think of an area, they most frequently felt that the FLEX program could use more activities and trips (15%). 11 percent of respondents also reported that improvement was needed in the placement of host families in particular, but some mentioned placement in a city or school as well.

<i>Do you have any recommendations for FLEX?¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
More Activities & Trips	15.4	139
Improve Placement (i.e. Host Families, Cities & Schools)	11.4	103
Improve Local Coordinators & Host Organization	9.5	86
Provide Bigger Monthly Allowances	7.1	64
Improvement of Pre-Orientation	6.6	60
More Meetings With Other Exchange Students	5.5	50
Improve Placement In Cities & Schools	3.1	28
Bring More Students on Program	3.2	29
Allow Students More Freedom	2.9	26
Length of Stay	2.7	24
Have More or Improve Workshops	2.1	19
Adjust Community Service Requirement	2.2	20
Take More Students to DC	1.8	16
Remedy Transportation Issues	1.6	14
Allow Students to Work & Earn Money	1.4	13
Improve Ways for Students to Seek Help	1.0	9

¹ 205 Respondents felt there was nothing to improve or couldn't think of anything

156 respondents reported something else which fell under categories of < 1%

Respondents were most likely to state that they were involved some or most of the time in family activities (97%), community service (92%), and cultural activities (85%).

<i>Extent of involvement in following activities:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Family activities	97.1	876	2.76
Community service	91.9	829	2.25
Cultural activities	85.4	770	2.22
Student clubs or organizations	72.8	657	2.02
Sports teams	64.7	584	1.83
Civic or political activism	60.3	544	1.64
Religious activities	52.8	477	1.59
Part-time job	25.0	226	0.97
Other	14.3	129	2.36

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who involved some or most of the time.

² 0=Never, 1=Seldom, 2=Some of the time, 3=Most of the time

Of the 129 students who frequently participated in an activity other than those listed, most (42%) listed that their time was spent with friends.

<i>Extent of participation in other activities:¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Time with friends	41.9	54
Cultural activities	15.5	20
School work & studying	14.7	19
Non-school clubs	14.0	18
Traveling	10.1	13
Sports teams	3.9	5
Other	3.9	5

¹ Respondent did not report anyone

FLEX respondents were most likely to state that they shared information about their country and culture with their host families and friends (99% each), and formal presentations at school (95%).

<i>Did you share information about your country/culture?</i>	<i>Yes</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Discussion with your host family	99.4	898
Discussion with you friends	99.4	898
Formal presentation at school	95.2	860
Formal presentation at a community event	60.6	547
Interview with the media	45.3	409
Formal presentation in a religious setting	32.4	292
Other	13.7	124

Of the 124 respondents who reported another way in which they shared information about their home country, most reported that they had discussions with someone other than their host family or friends (38%), or that they gave an informal presentation (26%)

<i>Other ways shared information about home country/culture:¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Discussion with others	37.9	47
Informal presentations	25.8	32
Engaged others in cultural activity from home country	19.4	24
Wrote articles local/school newspaper	10.2	13
Interview	6.5	8
Other	2.4	3

¹ 1 respondent did not report anything

Respondents were equally as likely to report that people had a better understanding of their countries because of what they shared by a good deal (42%) as a great deal (41%).

<i>Do people have better understanding of your country because of what you shared?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
A good deal	42.2	381
A great deal	40.7	367
Somewhat	13.9	125
A little	2.3	21
No, not at all	0.9	8
TOTAL¹	100%	902

¹ 1 respondent did not provided an answer

More than 90 percent of FLEX respondents agreed with each of the principles regarding equal rights in society.

<i>In society:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Ethnic minorities should have equal rights	96.2	868	1.8
Men and women should have equal opportunities	96.3	869	1.78
Religious minorities should have equal rights	93.2	841	1.68
People with disabilities (mentally or physically challenged) should have equal opportunities	92.6	836	1.6
Men and women should equally share family responsibilities	93.3	843	1.54

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement.

² -2=Strongly Disagree, -1=Somewhat Disagree, 0=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 1=Somewhat Agree, 2 = Strongly Agree

Over 93 percent of FLEX respondents agreed with each of the rights that an individual should have in society have the right except the right to practice any religion, which only had 89 percent of respondents agree.

<i>An individual in society has the right to:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Receive an education	98.3	888	1.91
Have acceptable health care	98.2	887	1.9
Have a job	97.2	878	1.84
Have freedom of speech	96.6	873	1.79
Have access to information	95.9	866	1.77
Be equal under the law	95.3	861	1.75
Have acceptable housing	95.8	955	1.74
Travel freely to another country	92.5	835	1.62
Practice any religion	88.9	802	1.58

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who either somewhat or strongly agreed with the statement.

² -2=Strongly Disagree, -1=Somewhat Disagree, 0=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 1=Somewhat Agree, 2 = Strongly Agree

Ninety-seven percent of respondents reported that they possessed either a beyond basic or advanced knowledge of daily life in the United States, while nearly as many (93%) said the same of United States values and culture.

<i>Rate knowledge of topics:</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Daily life in the United States	97.1	877	4.76
United States values and culture	93.4	843	4.47
Voluntary community service	85.4	771	4.35
Freedom of speech and the press in the United States	85.9	776	4.34
Religious and ethnic diversity in the United States	79.7	720	4.15
United States democracy	77.1	696	4.09
United States economy	63.1	570	3.79

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who rated their knowledge as either beyond or advanced.

² 1=No knowledge, 2=Less than basic, 3=Basic knowledge, 4=Beyond Basic, 5 = Advanced knowledge

Views of American people were more likely to be favorable than views of the United States government (93% vs. 70%).

<i>How do you view the following?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
American people	92.9	839	1.36
United States government	69.7	629	0.81

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents who held a favorable view

² -2 = Strongly unfavorable, -1 = Generally Unfavorable, 0 = Neither Favorable nor Unfavorable, 1 = Generally Favorable, 2 = Strongly Favorable

Sixty-nine percent of respondents agreed that the United States government is a trustworthy partner for their countries.

<i>How do you view the U.S. government and its relationship with your home country?</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
The United States government is a trustworthy partner for my country	68.6	619	0.86

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents in agreement

² -2 = Strongly Disagree, -1 = Disagree, 0 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 1 = Agree, 2 = Strongly Agree

At least 90 percent of respondents agreed with all of the democratic principles except that teachers should incorporate democratic principles into their management practices (77%).

<i>Extent of agreement</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
All citizens in a country should have equal rights and protections under the law, regardless of circumstances	98.4	889	1.84
Individuals and organizations have the right to free speech and to voice opposition	96.7	873	1.65
Free and fair elections are the cornerstone of democracy	95.1	859	1.64
The Rule of Law is fundamental to a functioning democracy	94.5	854	1.55
Voting is important because real decisions are made in elections	91.3	824	1.44
An independent media is important to the free flow of information	91.4	825	1.44
Teachers should incorporate democratic principles into their management practices	76.5	691	1.12

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents rated who either agreed or strongly agreed.

² -2=Strongly disagree, -1=Disagree, 0=Neither Agree nor Disagree, 1=Agree, 2=Strongly Agree

More than 89 percent of respondents rated themselves in all leadership characteristics as either “good” or “excellent”. Respondents considered themselves the strongest in self-reliance and flexibility.

<i>Rating of leader-characteristics</i>	<i>Percentage %¹</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Mean²</i>
Being self-reliant, being independent, relying on yourself	97.8	883	3.68
Being flexible	97.8	883	3.68
Discussing your beliefs/values	96.7	873	3.67
Being tolerant of people different from you	96.4	870	3.59
Listening to other people’s suggestions or concerns	94.7	856	3.53
Solving problems	96.6	872	3.53
Willing to make changes in your community	93.3	843	3.53
Expressing ideas and feelings	95.3	861	3.51
Critical thinking	94.4	852	3.5
Speaking in public	92.1	832	3.38
Leading a team and motivating others	88.7	801	3.28

¹ Defined as the percentage of respondents rated themselves as either good or excellent.

² 1=Poor, 2=Fair, 3=Good, 4=Excellent

FLEX respondents reported that they would do the following in their communities: participate in alumni activities (97%), organize or initiate new projects or activities (93%), volunteer (93%), and assume a leadership role (92%).

<i>Because of your participation, will you do any of the following in your community?</i>	<i>Yes</i>	
	<i>%</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Participate in FLEX alumni activities	96.9	875
Organize or initiate new projects or activities	92.9	839
Volunteer in your community	92.5	835
Assume a leadership role	91.5	826
Support economic rights and social justice in your community	86.0	777
Establish a new organization	62.0	560

The two most often selected ways FLEX respondents stated that they would share their experiences would be through presentations (95%) and media interviews (83%).

<i>Will you share your FLEX experience or knowledge in the following ways?</i>	Yes	
	%	Frequency
Give presentations to community, neighborhood, school, or university groups	94.6	854
Participate in media interviews	83.4	753
Write a Blog	60.5	546
Create a website	32.8	296
Other	15.0	135

Of the 135 respondents who felt they would share their experience in another way then those listed above, 60 percent indicated that they would do so while participating in an informal discussion.

<i>Other ways to share knowledge?¹</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Discussions	60.0	81
Writing	11.9	16
Formal Presentations	8.9	12
Starting Clubs	8.1	11
Alumni Program	5.2	7
Other	2.2	3

¹ 3 Respondents did not report anything

FLEX respondents stated that they would like to return to the United States, but more so for short-term pursuits like visiting (97%) and studying (70%).

<i>Would you like to return to the United States?</i>	Yes	
	%	Frequency
To visit	96.7	861
To study	69.7	629
To work	57.6	520
To live	24.1	218

FLEX respondents stated that they were most likely keep in touch with their host families (97%), other program participants (93%) and students they met in school (91%).

<i>Will you stay in touch with the following?</i>	Yes	
	%	Frequency
Host family	96.9	875
Other FLEX participants	92.7	837
Students met in high school	90.8	820
Host/placement organization staff	59.0	533
Teachers at my school	57.1	516
Community members	55.5	501
Other	14.7	133

Of those 133 respondents who plan to stay in touch with someone else other than those listed above, more than half (51%) mentioned someone they considered as a friend.

<i>Other people whom will stay in touch with:¹</i>	Percentage %	Frequency
Friends	51.1	68
Students	24.8	33
Church	12.0	16
Teammates	9.0	12
Other	6.8	9
Everyone	3.8	5

¹ 2 Respondents did not report anyone

Most respondents came from Ukraine (27%) and Russia (27%).

<i>Home Country:</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Ukraine	27.2	246
Russia	27.0	244
Kazakhstan	8.2	74
Kyrgyzstan	6.3	57
Turkmenistan	5.6	51
Georgia	4.7	42
Tajikistan	4.7	42
Moldova	4.3	39
Armenia	4.1	37
Azerbaijan	4.1	37
Uzbekistan	3.0	27
TOTAL¹	100%	896

¹ 7 respondents did not provide a response to this question in the pre

Sixty-eight percent of respondents came from an urban area in their country, while 32 percent came from a rural area.

<i>Geographic Location:</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Another major city in my country other than the capital	49.6	448
A small city, town or rural location in my country	31.7	286
My country's capital	18.7	169
TOTAL	100%	903

A majority of FLEX students (87%) were either 16 or 17 years old.

<i>Age</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
16	48.4	437
17	38.2	345
18	9.0	81
15	3.5	32
19	0.8	7
14	0.1	1
TOTAL	100%	903

Seventy-three percent of FLEX students are female.

<i>Gender</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Female	72.5	655
Male	27.5	248
TOTAL	100%	903

Most respondents identified themselves as either Christian (66%), or Muslim (22%).

<i>Which religious group do you consider yourself a member of?</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Christian	66.1	597
Muslim	22.1	200
Not close to any group	7.3	66
None	2.7	24
Buddhist	1.1	10
Baha'i	0.3	3
Jewish	0.2	2
Hindu	0.1	1
TOTAL	100%	903